

## ANA Brigades mark Central Corps start



Aghan president Karzai presents a brigade commander with the Afghan flag during the activation ceremony for the Afghan National Army's first and second brigades.

Story and photo by  
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**KABUL, Afghanistan**—The activation Saturday of the first and second brigades marked an important milestone in establishing a central army for Afghanistan.

President Karzai's speech highlighted the ceremony, praising the troops and telling them that they were the most important people in the country. Karzai gave each brigade, created to protect Afghanistan, its own flag, telling the commanders to honor the flag as they honor their

wives. Afterwards selected soldiers performed the cultural Pashtun dance, Ataana, for the honored guests.

These brigades are the first two of three that will compose the Central Corps. The Central Corps is an important goal in establishing a strong and trained army for the central government. Lt. Col. Andrew Simkins, chief of training, Afghan National Army Design Cell, British Army, says that the standup of the two brigades is only the first step, but an important one.

"We are currently able to

— See **CORPS**, Page 3

## Four-legged troops get parcels too

By Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke  
11<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** – Family and friends send care packages to deployed soldiers daily. What you don't normally find in them are dog biscuits.

A wife of a soldier here included a bag of treats in her recent package to her husband – something special for the four-legged soldiers.

Most people forget canines are fighting the War on Terror, but Kristi R. Draper didn't.

Draper, husband of Lt. Col. Larre Draper, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force, said, "Amid the horrors of war and destruction, these creatures maintain an innocence and vulnerability that touches a soft spot in our hearts."

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Photo by Pfc. Debralee P. Crankshaw

## Coffee anyone?

Afghans saw a board for the new Post Exchange porch, which will be screened and have chairs for soldiers to relax. Some treasured niceties that may be taken for granted back home are scheduled to arrive soon at the Bagram Air Base Post Exchange. Future additions include a coffee shop, alterations shop and the screened porch. For more about the PX additions, see Page 4.

# World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



*"Coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war," Bush said.*

## Bush gives order to attack Iraq

**WASHINGTON** — President Bush announced Wednesday night he has ordered the attack on Iraq to begin.

"American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger," Bush said.

He said the first strikes were against "selected targets of military importance."

A Pentagon official told CNN that cruise missiles were fired against "a target of opportunity," described as a "leadership target."

Air raid sirens were heard in Baghdad at about 5:30 a.m. Thursday (9:30 p.m. Wednesday ET) about 90 minutes after the U.S. deadline for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to step down or face a U.S.-led military attack.

The United States and Britain have massed nearly 300,000 troops in the Persian Gulf region.

## Military families juggle anxiety

**CNN** — With nearly a quarter million U.S. forces stationed in the Persian Gulf region, thousands of American families are wrestling with fears and standing with pride.

Children have kissed both parents goodbye. Husbands are pulling mom-duty, and parents have shipped off their entire broods.

Schools, worship centers and military facilities have offered counseling and established support groups to prop faltering spirits. And it helps — sometimes.

"While people try to understand and be

supportive, unless you're going through it, you really don't have any idea of the anxiety and the stress and the fear that a family's going through," said Laura Barnes, whose soldier husband has been deployed to the Persian Gulf.

Ronald and Mary Harper of Belleview, Florida, have four children and a son-in-law on the front lines in Kuwait.

"I'm actually trying to stay very strong for my kids. I know they want me to," Mary Harper said.

"I've involved myself in a couple of things that have really helped out. We have started a shoe-box drive," which includes coveted snacks and comfort items for troops.

## 17 Iraqis surrender to U.S. troops

**DOHA, Qatar** — As the first Iraqi soldiers lined up to surrender, coalition aircraft Wednesday dropped more than 2 million leaflets over suspected Iraqi troop positions, delivering for the first time a "capitulation" message and telling Iraqi soldiers how to avoid being harmed in the expected U.S.-led invasion.

A statement from the U.S. Central Command said the capitulation theme did "not necessarily indicate a coalition military offensive against Iraq is imminent," but said it would help prepare for any eventual military operations ordered by President Bush.

It was also an attempt by coalition forces to minimize Iraqi casualties.

Seventeen Iraqi soldiers may have taken the U.S. leaflet campaign to heart as they surrendered Wednesday to U.S. troops.

The men were believed to be the first of their countrymen to give up — a move the U.S. Air Force has been actively encouraging for months by showering the Iraqi landscape with leaflets.

## FBI eyes Iraqi diplomatic plates

**WASHINGTON** — The FBI is asking state and local law enforcement agencies to report any suspicious activities involving vehicles with Iraqi diplomatic license plates, the bureau's weekly bulletin said.

The bulletin, a copy of which was ob-

tained by CNN, was sent out Wednesday. It describes the license plate numbering system for Iraqi diplomatic personnel in New York and Washington.

In a separate advisory sent out Tuesday, the FBI warned of Iraqis in the United States who are already under surveillance as possibly being connected to the Iraqi Intelligence Service, which, the advisory said, is capable of assassinations, hijackings and bombings.

## Bahrain offers exile to Saddam

**MANAMA, Bahrain** — Bahrain's king has offered "safe exile" to Saddam Hussein, saying he hopes the Iraqi leader "would seriously consider this offer before the onset of war," the government-run Bahrain News Agency said Wednesday.

Bahrain's palace, the seat of government, confirmed the offer, according to Bahrain TV.

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa "announced that Bahrain is willing to accommodate Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, if he wishes to reside here, with dignity and without disgrace to Iraq."

The king said that Bahrain's initiative "comes as part of its nationalistic responsibilities, towards ensuring security and stability in the region, in order to avoid war on Iraq and its people."

## Blix: Iraq unlikely to use chemical, germ weapons

**UNITED NATIONS** — Iraq is unlikely to use chemical or biological weapons to defend itself from a U.S.-led invasion because world opinion would turn against it, chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix told CNN Wednesday.

"If they have any — and still, that's a big if — I would doubt that they would use it because a lot of countries and people in the world are negative to the idea of waging war," Blix said.

"If the Iraqis were to use any chemical weapons, then I think the public opinion around the world would immediately turn against Iraq, and they would say, as well, that the invasion was justified."

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conduct company-level operations, which we are successfully doing at Bamian, Orgun-E, and Gardez. These advanced-training operations also allow the ANA to show a presence to people in the provinces. It's vital that this succeeds, or otherwise the non-legitimate armies out there have some regional sway," he said. "You've got to direct that power away from them. So we build the relationship, the respect and the responsibilities of the ANA."

There are still many challenges before completion of the Central Corps. Training infantry soldiers is only one step in creating a strong and efficient army. An army needs leaders, and there wasn't an officer corps. Currently, the only officers are those who have brought their rank with them from the Afghan Military Force, so the French Army has established an officer's training program for the ANA. Simkins said, "That reinvigorates that element of career progression. We've got to feed the system from the bottom so that we get young lieutenants in that develop through the system."

The next tier of leadership is one that these soldiers have never experienced, the role of the noncommissioned officer. "They didn't have NCOs who have leadership skills, management skills, who sit firmly within a tiered structure," Simkins said. It is important to create an NCO corps that these soldiers can understand, "Ultimately when we hand off to them we want to make sure that they are comfortable with it, that it's not alien to their way of inter-relationships."

Recruits training with the 7<sup>th</sup> BANA, scheduled to graduate March 27, will fill vacant slots in the new brigades. Subsequent training cycles will focus on soldiers for the third brigade, with training on combat support elements to support these infantry soldiers.

"This is a complex process, we've just actually reached a point where it's going to be more complex," said Simkins. "If you look at combat support, reconnaissance, tank artillery, combat service support, supply, medical transport, it's a much more complicated skill set than producing infantry battalions. The focal point for us is by June 2004, which is the national elections. (By then) we can, hand on heart, say that the Central Corps is fully operational."

## Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "Forever Young." When a Roman general is betrayed and his family murdered by a corrupt prince, he comes to Rome as a gladiator to seek revenge.



Tomorrow's movie will be "The Transporter."

## Local weather

### TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<b>Bagram:</b>	<i>Mostly cloudy</i> H: 59F L: 36F	<i>Scattered showers</i> H: 55F L: 39F
<b>Kandahar:</b>	<i>Scattered showers</i> H: 75F L: 54F	<i>Mostly cloudy</i> H: 73F L: 52F
<b>Kabul:</b>	<i>Haze</i> H: 61F L: 36F	<i>Scattered snow</i> H: 52F L: 41F
<b>Uzbekistan:</b>	<i>Mostly cloudy</i> H: 70F L: 46F	<i>Partly cloudy</i> H: 73F L: 46F

*Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team*

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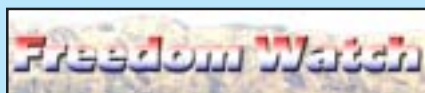
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# Coffee shop, pizza, alterations shop planned for PX

Story and photo by  
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**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** — Common luxuries of home are usually unreachable while a servicemember is deployed, but the Post Exchange is working to change that for members here.

The recent additions of the “Hooah” room and the barber-shop were only the beginning for the PX. The next additions planned are a coffee shop and a

screened porch.

The coffee shop will offer coffee, lattes, espresso, cappuccino, baked goods and sandwiches.

“We did this because the command was very supportive,” said Maria Schizas-Price, PX manager. “I know I need coffee – I think we all need coffee.”

The porch will have chairs, flowers and, if the beams can support them, a TV and VCR.

“We want this to be a place

where (servicemembers) can relax, chat or do something other than sit in their tent,” said Schizas-Price.

The barbershop will be moved to another room for space and plumbing and the coffee shop will replace it.

The porch and coffee shop should be completed and open by April.

Other additions planned include a pizzeria, Subway, landscaping, an alteration shop and a sew shop.



*An Afghan cements a wall in the Post Exchange in preparation for the new coffee shop.*

## **DOGS**, from Page 1

The dog lover and owner of two dogs said she thought it would be a cute idea to send treats when she heard about the dogs serving their country here.

Every once in a while someone will stop by and give treats to the dogs, said Sgt. Jon Lockhart, Combined Joint Task Force-180, Provost Marshal Office (canine).

Lockhart gave a couple of biscuits to each of the dogs present. Then he released his partner, Rocky, a Belgian Malinois, from his kennel to show off a few of his tricks. He shook paws with Lockhart and then he balanced a biscuit on his nose. When his master allowed him to, Rocky gobbled up the treat.

“He would say, ‘thank you’ if he could talk,” said Lockhart.

Like Rocky, all of the six dogs that work here don’t usually have a day off, according to Lockhart. The dog handler and his partner are here on their second rotation. Every day, the seven-year explosive detecting veteran sniffs out 30 to 60 vehicles, said Lockhart.

With the current world situation going on, “there is a necessity for canine teams,” said Lockhart.

All six of the dogs here were trained to military standards.

Once a dog is trained in attack, the military may purchase it. Then the dog is tested to sniff out ten different odors. Depending



Photo by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke

*Sgt. Jon Lockhart, Combined Joint Task Force-180, Provost Marshal Office (canine), balances a treat on his partner Rocky's nose. Every day the team searches vehicles that come on base for explosive devices.*

on how well it does, the dog will end up in one of three categories — as an explosive detection, narcotic detection or if the canine doesn’t meet up to the first two standards it qualifies as a patrol canine. Bagram has five dogs specializing in finding explosives and one in finding narcotics.

They must keep up to standards or they will be uncertified, said Lockhart. Once a year, they are tested in proficiency of detection. If tests results are lower than 90 per-

cent in narcotics and 95 percent in explosives, their certification is revoked.

After working like a dog all day long, Rocky or one of his canine friends will take a run down Disney Drive with their handler. Once the kennel’s compound is clear of mines and some hescos arrive, the dogs will have a little more room to run and roam.

For right now, Rocky looks up to his handler, patiently waiting for his next command and another treat.



# Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)

## GM O'Connell to replace Ftorek

**BOSTON** — Robbie Ftorek was fired Wednesday as coach of the Boston Bruins, a team struggling to make the playoffs after a strong start.

General manager Mike O'Connell replaces Ftorek on an interim basis.

The Bruins had the NHL's best record at 19-4-3-1 on Dec. 8, but slipped to 33-28-8-4 and into seventh place in the Eastern Conference after Tuesday's 2-1 loss to Phoenix.

Ftorek, in his second season as Boston's coach, was the Bruins' 10th coach in 18 years. The team also fired assistant coach Jim Hughes but kept assistant Wayne Cashman. Mike Sullivan, head coach of the Bruins' AHL affiliate in Providence, R.I., was promoted to assistant in Boston, and Scott Gordon was named Providence head coach.

"This change is being made at this time because of this team's record over our past 46 games and the fact that, fairly or unfairly, the coach is judged on the record," O'Connell said.

Ftorek became coach in May 2001 after a season in which Pat Burns was fired eight games into his fourth year. His replacement, Mike Keenan, coached the Bruins to their second straight non-playoff season.

A Needham native and one of the best high school hockey players in Massachusetts history, Ftorek led the Bruins to first place in the Eastern Conference last season with a 43-24-6-9 record. But they were eliminated in the first round of the playoffs by Montreal.

## Special teams need to be special

**ESPN** — Before the big-money Dallas Stars, there were the low-rent North Stars. And, back in 1991, that grubby group of North Stars — that included a rookie named Mike Modano — took the hockey state of Minnesota on a magical spring ride through the playoffs.

Those North Stars, who finished the regular season with a dismal 27-39-14 record and qualified for the postseason because the Leafs were even more inept, came within two victories of having their names engraved on the Stanley Cup. And they might have done if it weren't for a fellow by the name of Mario Lemieux, who led Penguins past the Cinderella North Stars in a six-game final series.

How, you ask, did the 68-point North Stars manage



*Robbie Ftorek became the eighth coach to be fired this season.*

such an incredible run? Two words: power play.

The '91 North Stars, under first-year coach Bob Gainey, opened the playoffs with a shocking upset of the President's Trophy-winning Blackhawks, who finished the regular season with 106 points, 38 more than Minnesota. In the six-game series, the North Stars tied a league record for a single playoff series (previous established by the 1980 Islanders), netting 15 power-play goals en route to the stunning victory.

In the second round, the North Stars met the Blues, who finished a single point behind the Blackhawks in the regular-season standings. Again, the North Stars' power-play unit was the difference in what proved to be a six-game series. In Game 4, Minny tied a league record with four PPGs in one period during an 8-4 win that gave the North Stars a 3-1 stranglehold on the series.

By the end of their run, the North Stars — led by veterans Dave Gagner, Neal Broten, Brian Bellows and Brian Propp — scored 35 PPGs, a record for a single playoff season that still stands.

"We just got on an unbelievable run," remembers Flames GM Craig Button, who was an amateur scout for those North Stars. "It just seemed like everything we did worked."

## Forsberg's return to Avs will have to wait

**ESPN** — The Sharks-Avalanche game scheduled for Wednesday

See **SPORTS**, Page 6



## 2002 National Hockey League standings

### Eastern Conference

<b>Atlantic</b>	
(2x) New Jersey	72 pts
(4x) Philadelphia	72 pts
(8) N.Y. Islanders	73 pts
N.Y. Rangers	75 pts
Pittsburgh	74 pts
<b>Northeast</b>	
(1x) Ottawa	74 pts
(5) Toronto	73 pts
(7) Boston	73 pts
Montreal	74 pts
Buffalo	73 pts
<b>Southeast</b>	
(3) Tampa Bay	73 pts
(6) Washington	73 pts
Florida	74 pts
Atlanta	72 pts
Carolina	74 pts

### Western Conference

<b>Central</b>	
(1x) Detroit	70 pts
(4) St. Louis	69 pts
Nashville	69 pts
Chicago	69 pts
Columbus	69 pts
<b>Northwest</b>	
(3x) Vancouver	70 pts
(5) Colorado	69 pts
(6) Minnesota	69 pts
(8) Edmonton	70 pts
Calgary	69 pts
<b>Pacific</b>	
(2x) Dallas	71 pts
(7) Anaheim	70 pts
Phoenix	69 pts
Los Angeles	70 pts
San Jose	69 pts

x = clinched playoff spot.



## SPORTS, from Page 5

day night was postponed because of a blizzard that left 5-foot snowdrifts in parts of Colorado and Wyoming.

The game in Denver was rescheduled for Thursday night.

The decision to postpone came after league officials consulted with Denver Mayor Wellington Webb.

Avalanche center Peter Forsberg is expected to return to the lineup when the teams play. Forsberg, whose 88 points are third in the league in scoring, missed one game and part of another with a charley horse to his left thigh.

"I'm looking forward to it," Forsberg told reporters Tuesday after taking part in practice. "I feel good. It was a little bit tough to skate after coming back from a long road trip and a day off, but I'm OK."

Forsberg will resume skating on the Avs' top line with Alex Tanguay and Milan Hejduk, leaving Joe Sakic to skate again with Steve Reinprecht and Bates Battaglia, who will play in Denver for the first time after being acquired from Carolina.

### Sharks part with GM Lombardi

**SAN JOSE, Calif.** — The San Jose Sharks fired general manager Dean Lombardi on Tuesday, capping their disappointing campaign with a complete overhaul for one of the NHL's most stable organizations.

Owner Greg Jamison's surprising move came three weeks before the close of the Sharks' first regular season in six years in which they won't improve their points total from the previous season. San Jose is 26-33-6-7, last in the Pacific Division — which they won last season — and 13th in the Western Conference.

Nearly four months after Lombardi fired coach Darryl Sutter and began trading players in an effort to spark the Sharks, Jamison dis-

missed one of the NHL's most respected young executives in a brief morning meeting.

"This team has basically underperformed in a very big way this year," Jamison said. "We decided it was time to take a fresh start."

Lombardi had been a part of the Sharks since their founding season, and he transformed them from an NHL laughingstock to a Stanley Cup contender in the seven years since he was promoted to general manager. All the while, he preached patience in a long-term plan that seemed to be going smoothly until this season.

In a hasty news conference at the Shark Tank, Jamison — the team president and the head of a group of investors that bought the Sharks last season — was evasive about his reasoning for the decision and its timing. Lombardi signed a four-year contract extension last summer.

"Right now, we're basically a lottery team. We need a fresh start," Jamison said. "We wanted to get started right now. Today is a new beginning, and we look forward to some exciting hockey for next season."

### Hockey League fines club \$50,000

**TORONTO** — Former NHL star John Vanbiesbrouck was suspended indefinitely from a junior hockey league Wednesday for using a racial slur to describe a black player on his team.

The Ontario Hockey League also fined his team, the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds, \$50,000.

Vanbiesbrouck previously resigned as coach and general manager of the team and said he planned to sell his 25 percent ownership stake.

Vanbiesbrouck may apply after five years for reinstatement.

OHL commissioner David Branch said the league wanted to "make a strong and unambiguous statement" that such comments "will not be tolerated."



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By Kevin Kilgore

## Laugh Support